

# GLOSSARY

CONSERVATOR - Person appointed by the court to handle the financial affairs and estate of a person who cannot effectively manage it him/herself.

ESTATE -The property of a person.

EXPERT - Someone with expertise regarding the type of incapacity of the respondent.

GUARDIAN - Someone appointed by the court to make various kinds of life decisions for an incapacitated person. A full guardian has the legal duties and powers listed in AS 13.26.ISO(c). A partial guardian has fewer legal duties and powers than a full guardian.

GUARDIAN AD LITEM - Special guardian appointed by the court to represent the respondent.

INCAPACITATED PERSON - Person who cannot meet the essential requirements for his or her physical health or safety without court-ordered assistance.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE SETTING - A legal requirement that an incapacitated person not be placed into a setting that is more confining than necessary.

**MEDIATION** - An informal, voluntary and confidential method to resolve conflicts or disagreements. The **MEDIATOR** is an objective and impartial party. The mediator has no binding authority, and does not decide whether one party is right or wrong. Decisions are made by the parties involved.

**OFFICE OF PUBLIC ADVOCACY** - The state agency which, in some cases, provides the respondent's attorneys, court visitor, expert, public guardian, and guardian ad litem.

**PETITIONER** -The person who files a petition asking the court to appoint a guardian or conservator for an incapacitated person.

**POWER OF ATTORNEY** - A legal document authorizing another to act as one's agent or attorney.

**PROBATE MASTER** - In some areas of the state a probate master acts on behalf of the judge in hearing the petition for guardianship or conservatorship.

**PROTECTED PERSON** - A person who has had a guardian or conservator appointed. The term **WARD** is also used.

**PUBLIC GUARDIAN** - A state agency which provides guardianship, when no private person is available to act as guardian for the incapacitated person.

REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE - an individual or organization that receives Social Security and/or SSI payments for someone who cannot manage his/her money. Payees must use the funds for the needs of the beneficiary and save any remaining funds for the beneficiary's future use.

RESPONDENT - the person who is alleged to be incapacitated and in need of a guardian or conservator. (Note: After a guardian is appointed, the respondent is called a WARD or PROTECTED PERSON.)

WARD - a person for whom a guardian has been appointed. The term PROTECTED PERSON is also used.